

# THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



ROSE AND HER FATHER.

## HURLOCK CHASE.

BY G. H. SARGENT, AUTHOR OF "STORY OF A CITY ARAB."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—ROSE.

It was well for Rose Vincent that her daily and important occupations in the management of her father's establishment gave her but scant time for vain imaginings. No doubt for a little while after the departure of the guests she felt those duties to be more commonplace and wearisome than she had been accustomed to consider them; but good sense and piety came to her aid. "I am very foolish," she said to herself, "to think

so much of that pleasant time, and more foolish still to try to remember the soft flatteries which were addressed to me by my father's guests. It is sinful of me to repine that my lot was not cast in the crowded city instead of in this beautiful solitude; and I will not repine."

Rose had no encouragement from her father to dwell upon any remembrances of their late visitors. It was evident to her that, however genuinely he had welcomed them to the settlement and pressed their stay, their departure was a relief to his mind. She traced this change in his feelings to the evening of his strange dis-

composure, and could not help fancying that the change arose simply from natural watchful jealousy on her own account. "My poor father," Rose thought, "was afraid of my committing some folly. He told me as much—said that I was too fond of listening to Mr. Rivers; Harry Rivers, they called him. And I was fond of listening to him; but I am sure now, as I was then, that there was no harm in my listening to him: at least—at least—I think there was not. Who could help being pleased with his good sense and manly sentiments? But, beyond this, what was Mr. Rivers to me, or I to Mr. Rivers? We shall never see each other again, I dare say; and when he returns to his home in England—if he should escape the dangers of the expedition on which he and his companions are gone—he will scarcely remember his short visit to our settlement at all; much less will he have a thought for the simple girl who is unjustly suspected of having been too fond of listening to him."

It is not at all improbable that many more thoughts of this description passed occasionally through Rose's mind; but, as she was not rendered at all unhappy by them, we feel justified in endorsing her firm assurance that there was no harm done; and if sometimes, in her private devotions, when she offered the fervent litany, that it would please God to preserve all that travelled by land or by water, her thoughts reverted to the wanderers whom she had seen depart from under her father's roof in search of unknown adventures—why, there was not only no harm in that either, but untold good; for no earthly and selfish views were concealed in that remembrance.

Rose Vincent might, however, have saved herself some heart-searchings and groundless accusations had she known what you, reader, already know, that her father's discomposure arose from a cause very far remote from considerations connected with his daughter's affections. How it was that, prior to the evening already referred to, he had not made the discovery that one of his guests was the son of one of his former companions in that dark passage of his young history, we cannot explain, except by supposing that his mind, preoccupied by sorrows and fears, was generally imperceptive of what passed immediately before his bodily senses. He did make the discovery, however, when Harry Rivers was accidentally led into speaking of the old ruins of Hurlock Priory, and the kind hearts he had left behind him there; and with this discovery was linked another, namely, that this too fascinating guest was nearly related to himself, and was the cousin of his Rose. For it is to be remembered that, in his abrupt and determined concealment of himself from his sisters, and his self-abandonment to the wretchedness of his remorse, and the punishment he had inflicted on himself for his guilt, Vincent Fleming (as we must here call the settler) had shut himself out from all means of obtaining intelligence respecting his relatives in England. It was astounding news to him, therefore, that a marriage had ever taken place between his sister Bessy and Rivers, and that poor Bessy did not long survive this union. Taking all this into account, and remembering the harassing dread which had taken hold of Vincent's soul, that evil was pursuing him to overthrow him, it is not to be greatly wondered at that he was agitated by the startling discoveries he had made, nor that, from that time, for his daughter's sake as well as for his own peace of mind, he earnestly desired the departure of his guests, and fervently hoped that his nephew would ever remain ignorant of this affinity to himself and his Rose of the wilderness. The reader will understand, also, how it

came to pass that Rose had no encouragement, however much she might have desired it, to speak to her father of the visitors who had for a few days enlivened the solitude of their dwelling. Repulsed once or twice, she never afterwards resumed the subject; and, as we have before observed, her constant occupations, together with that proper regulation of the feelings which is one of the blessed effects of religion in the heart, placed her thoughts of the wanderers under rigid subordination and control.

There were those around Rose who, no doubt, were ready enough to enliven the dulness and irksomeness of their wilderness life by returning once and again to the great event of having a houseful of guests. The old woman, a French Canadian by birth, who had been Rose's nurse, and yet retained an honorary as well as an honoured position in the household, and the three lasses (daughters of the small settlement) who formed Rose's domestic *ménage*, did not see why they should not talk—and they did talk to their hearts' content, it is to be hoped—of the handsome young Englishman; but, as they received no encouragement from their young mistress to fill her ear with their praises, and as, moreover, there was a certain amount of native dignity about Rose which forbade over-familiarity, they contented themselves with weaving their own webs of romance in their own proper domains. After a few weeks, indeed, the subject became worn tolerably threadbare, and was superseded by the more stirring event of a bear-chase, or by the discovery of an Indian trail in the woods, which, though it proved to be a false alarm, caused the settlers for a time to look well to their defences, and engrossed their anxious cares.

Thus the short but enchantingly beautiful Canadian summer passed away, and autumn, with its golden harvests, also came and went; both leaving behind, however, their precious *souvenirs* in well-filled barns and multiplied flocks and herds.

It was mid-winter then, and the whole country was buried some feet deep beneath a hard and compact covering of frozen snow, while the almost boundless forests, which shut in the settlement on three sides, were stripped of their foliage, and showed only a dismal array of apparently dead branches and sapless trunks.

In former years Mr. Vincent had taken advantage of the season, and the necessary cessation from farm labour, to extend his clearing by waging war against the forest trees; and though he now slackened his energies and appeared to have lost all interest in increasing the dimensions and value of his cultivated estate, the humble settlers around him did not choose to let the opportunity slip-by of what was to them a joyous excitement. The woods, therefore, were noisy by day with the sound of axes and saws, and the crashing of falling timber; and at night the sky was lighted up by the numerous enormous fires which relieved the clearings of what, under the circumstances, was mere lumber.

Nor was the season without its appropriate gratifications for the feebler or idler members of the settlement. It was the most favourable time in all the year for receiving visitors and paying friendly visits; and, through the short days of December and January, intercourse with families living in distant and widely scattered settlements, which had necessarily been suspended during the busy year, from seed-time to harvest, was renewed; a hard and smooth coating of snow offering facilities for sleigh travelling which no true Canadian, whether male or female, was ever known to undervalue.

Rose Vincent, at least, did not undervalue this facility. To be sure, her acquaintance with her far-distant neigh-

bours was slight; nor was there any great sympathy of mind between them and herself, so as to make frequent personal communion very precious: but Rose was mortal, and she was sociable also; and she had a kindly and even warm welcome to give to the boisterously merry and particularly unrefined groups who, at least once a week, drove up to her father's house, and tumbled out of their carriages so wrapped up in skins of bears and foxes as to have (until divested of these coverings by a gradual process of disrobing) little likeness to "the human form divine."

Then there were return visits to be paid; and Rose's father, rousing himself for a season from his morbid apathy and dejection, took in hand the reins, and, with his daughter by his side, warmly shielded from the frosty air, drove his swiftly gliding sleigh along the wide and waste expanse of the frost-bound river, or through the openings of the forests which girdled in his domains.

On returning from one of these visits, which had extended over two days, Rose was conducted by her old nurse to her chamber, where a large stove, fed with enormous billets from the forest, blazed forth a warm welcome to its mistress. The nurse's countenance, too, was lighted up with evident satisfaction that her darling had returned in safety; for these journeys, however exciting and pleasurable, were not unfrequently attended with considerable danger.

"A mercy it is," she said, "that you are come back, my pretty, *ma mignonne*" (the old nurse, we have said, was a French Canadian by birth, and she was apt to garnish her conversation with the colonial vernacular she had learned in her childhood); "yes, a mercy it is that you are come back safe to your old Catherine, *ma belle*. And you have brought your good looks with you too; and that's a fine thing, my dear, my beauty."

"You are glad to see me again, then, nurse, after my long, long absence, extending to—let me see—almost sixty hours," said Rose, gaily.

"Ah, now you are laughing at me, darling; but *n'importe*; it signifies nothing: but maybe you will not be so gay, my Rose, when you hear the news I have to tell."

"News, nurse!" exclaimed Rose, suddenly turning round and looking earnestly and anxiously into the face of old Catherine; "news! No bad news, I trust, nurse. Surely nothing has happened in the settlement since we left it—nothing to make my father or me regret having taken a holiday?"

"Nothing very terrible, my Rose of delight"—this in French. "You sometimes tell me, darling, that there is nothing so bad that has not good wrapped up in it, if we will but believe; though, for my own part, I don't understand—"

"Oh, nurse, nurse! you have something to tell that you do not like to utter," said Rose; "but since it does not relate to my dear father, it cannot be so bad, I trust. Ah, I see by your eyes, dear nurse, that nothing terrible has happened. Annette has had an accident with the best china tea-things; or Lucy has spoiled my poor silk mantua in attempting to alter it to the present fashion, according to the last '*Magazin des Modes*;' or the largest barrel of salt beef has turned out to be tainted; or my poor brindled cow is ill. Is it some such sad disaster that is to take away my gaiety?"

"You will never guess, *ma mignonne*. You do not know that after you left home only a few hours we had visitors; and your poor nurse had to receive them with due honours."

"Visitors! This is sorrowful, truly! But since they

did not run away with you, dear Catherine, I must be content that you were at home to show all due hospitality. Yet, nurse, it puzzles me to guess who your visitors could be."

"They had travelled a long, long distance, my child. Ah, I see you begin to understand. Guess, now."

"Oh, nurse, nurse! you delight to tease me a little, a very little," said Rose, quickly, and with a somewhat heightened colour, but this might have been the effect of the glowing stove; "but I will guess, to please you. Surely your visitors were not the gentlemen who honoured us with their company so many months ago?"

"Ah, I perceive my Rose understands me now; but only in part," replied Catherine. "You remember one of them, my beauty—so tall and handsome—so commanding?"

"Mr. Rivers?"

"Yes, Mr. Rivers. What would you say, my Rose, if I were to tell you that you have missed seeing that very handsome and kind-speaking gentleman?"

"I should say that I am sorry, nurse; sorry not to have been at home to receive him, or any of his friends," said Rose, quietly, and without a blush of conscious concealment. "And I am sorry, too, nurse, if he has been here, that you did not detain him till our return. My father will be vexed, I am sure."

"But I did detain him, my pretty; and Mr. Rivers is here now, at this very moment," said Catherine, gravely.

"Nurse! Oh, nurse! and you have been playing with my curiosity all this time!" exclaimed the maiden, as she now commenced in earnest to divest herself of her travelling encumbrances. "You should have told me at first that the gentleman was in our house, so that I might have welcomed him directly I got home. You know how absent my father is. But surely Mr. Rivers did not come alone?"

"There, now I have vexed my darling," said old Catherine, penitently.

"No, no, not vexed, dear nurse;" and, throwing her arm around Catherine's neck, she sealed the assertion with a kiss. "There, nurse, you see I am not; and now—" Rose, having by this time hurried through her simple toilette, was leaving her room with a quick step, when her progress was arrested by her companion.

"Stay, my darling: I have not told you all. You said, this minute, 'Surely Mr. Rivers did not come alone?' He did not come alone, *ma mignonne*; and I must tell you at last, my pretty: he is so ill, so ill. Oh, Rose dear, you would not know him now! Listen, my child," continued the old nurse, "and I will tell you all. It was soon after you drove away from home that the door opened, and in came those two Indians—the guides, you remember; and they bore between them a little bed, a litter made of rough branches of trees and skins, and they put it down on the floor; and there, when they uncovered it, was that poor young gentleman, too weak to speak a word, and unable to bear the light, for his eyes were fast shut; and, Rose, the Indians had carried him I know not how many scores of miles from the white man's camp, as they said, where he must have died: for they were very sorely pressed; and they had to fight with the Blackfoot Indians, and some have been killed who were here so happy and frank-hearted; and Mr. Rivers was badly wounded. Oh dear, you turn pale, my beauty!"

"Surely I may well turn pale if this news be true. Did the Indians tell you this, nurse?"

"They did; and they told me more than I have time to repeat to you, even if I dared."

"I will speak to the men myself, nurse," said Rose.



"You cannot, *ma colombe*, my dove of the woods: they are gone," replied Catherine. "They ate and drank, so that one would have thought they had not tasted food for a month; then they laid down before the fire and slept like pigs; but when I looked for them the next morning—yesterday—they were gone."

"And the young gentleman, nurse, Mr. Rivers?"

"He is cared for, my pretty Rose; be sure of that. I had him taken to the bed-chamber which *le père* has not slept in since *la mère*—oh, the dear, the dear!—since your poor mother died; and I made him comfortable, trust poor old Catherine for that, my beauty; and I sent for Annette's mother to come and help me; and she is with him now, or I should not be here so long with you, for the poor *malade* is light-headed: a mercy he lived to reach our settlement at all. And say, my darling little mistress, have I done right?"

"Quite right, dear nurse. But what can I do?"

"My dear, you need do nothing, only trust to your poor old nurse to take care of the young gentleman till he is able to receive you *en règle*. Yes, you can do something else, my sweet Rose: you can tell your father the news, and keep him from worrying himself."

"I will tell my father, nurse; but, oh, Catherine dear, do you think Mr. Rivers will live? You said that he had been wounded."

"Wounded and left for dead, darling," said Catherine, who was not unwilling to flavour her tale with a spice of romantic horror; "and a wonder it is that those Blackfoot savages did not take the poor young gentleman's scalp—"

"Don't—pray don't, nurse! How can you think of such a shocking thing? But do you think, dear Catherine, that—"

"That Mr. Rivers will live? Surely, since he survived the jolting through the forests, and the cold; though the Indians had taken care of him, I will say that for them; but since he survived all that, I think it would be very perverse of him to die now he is so well cared for. Ah, that is right, my pretty! Your colour is coming again now; and let but your bright eyes smile on the poor sick man, I think there will be no fear that he shall not live to thank you for your kind thoughts of him."

"It is foolish of you to say so, nurse dear," said Rose, gravely, as she left her room to seek her father.

#### CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE PATIENT.

CATHERINE had not exaggerated Harry Rivers's danger. For many days he continued in a state of delirium; and when this yielded to the febrifuges which the experience of his two nurses enabled them to prescribe, he sunk into extreme bodily weakness, which for many weeks seemed to render his recovery almost hopeless.

It was quite true that he had been very severely and dangerously handled. A fearful gash on the side of the head, probably inflicted by an Indian weapon, was the least serious of the many wounds he had received. How he had received them could only be gathered from the account given by the friendly Indians, who, perhaps, had saved his life. There had been a fight with some outlying tribe, in which some at least of the exploring party had lost their lives; but under what circumstances the quarrel had arisen, or what was the present state of the defensive party, the settlers had no means of knowing.

To do the Indian guides justice, it is right to say that they had not only exposed themselves to the fatigues and privations of a very long and toilsome journey to place the wounded man under the care of his friends in the settlement, but they had also skilfully and judi-

ciously dressed and bound up his wounds in their own rude fashion, so that inflammation was prevented, and a favourable process of healing had already commenced. It had not been in their power, however, any more than it was in the power of nurse Catherine and her coadjutor, to restore at once to the exhausted arteries and veins the life-blood which had poured out from those wounds, nor to give tone to the nervous system of the sufferer. In short, it was evident that, if it should eventually take place, the recovery of Harry Rivers would necessarily be very long protracted.

It was well, indeed, for him that he had dropped, not only upon such good quarters, but into such able hands as our two nurses (to say nothing of Rose and her father) proved themselves to be; for the nearest physician, or surgeon, or apothecary, or, rather, the single representative of these three humane professions bound up in one small specimen, lived at the distance of some sixty miles from the settlement. It is true, a sleigh journey of sixty, or four times sixty miles, is but a bagatelle when you are used to it; and it may be sufficient to show that Mr. Vincent (we still give Vincent Fleming the benefit of his *alias*) was solicitous for the guest, thus for the second time imposed upon him uninvited, when we state that, the day after the arrival of the wounded and apparently dying man, he caused his best horse to be harnessed to the sleigh, and started off alone to the doctor's place of abode, and, travelling at the rate of twelve miles an hour, reached his destination before the shades of evening closed in. Fortunately he found the little professional gentleman sufficiently disengaged, not only to listen to his story, but to return with him to the settlement on the following day. Manifestly, however, these visits could not be often, if at all, repeated; and having, therefore, deliberately examined the patient, given many verbal instructions to the nurses, who (as is usual in similar cases) mentally reserved obedience or neglect according to their own opinions on the matter, and having also disburdened himself of various medicines with which he had providently stored his travelling-bag, the doctor took his leave on the next day, returning to his home as he left it, under convoy of Mr. Vincent, confidently predicting that if the patient did well he would assuredly recover; guarding his encouraging vaticination, however, with the cautious observation that if the constitutional vigour of the patient should prove not to be equal to the emergency, he would in all probability sink under it.

"As if I could not have told him as much myself, *le charlatan*!" muttered nurse Catherine, as soon as the doctor's back was turned. He did not hear the gentle compliment, however.

As to Mr. Vincent, it would be difficult to describe, perhaps even to imagine, the various and contradictory feelings which at this time agitated his frail and enfeebled mind. Urged on by genuine hospitality and sympathy, and perhaps also by some occult natural affection which he dared not avow, towards his unfortunate guest, he had eagerly undertaken the long and benevolent errands just mentioned, and probably enjoyed while thus engaged a happy respite from the terrors by which he had so long been haunted. But when these journeys were over, and he found himself once more under the same roof with his nephew, and compelled to play towards him the part of a generous host, while he dared not, because of his unreal and morbid fears, reveal that relationship, all those terrors returned with increased malignity. Evil was pursuing him—hunting him—to overthrow him. And not him alone. This was enough, truly; but the misery of it



was that his Rose—"sole daughter of his house and heart"—must suffer with him, and share in his overthrow. It was useless—so, no doubt, the unhappy man argued—useless to attempt an evasion of his fate. As the stars in their courses fought against Sisera, so Providence, in its hidden and silent movements, was fighting against him. Else, why had young Rivers and himself been so strangely brought together in the first place? or why, after that meeting had passed off innocuously, had the stream of events once more compelled this second contact? There was more in this conjunction than mere accident: it was the preordained manner in which, at length, just and righteous punishment was to be brought home to his weary soul. So the conscience-stricken man believed.

It might indeed have been argued, *per contra*, that Vincent Fleming (to call him once more, in this stage of our story, by his rightful name) had no reason to fear evil from his own nephew, whom he had never injured either personally or relatively; and that the chance or the providential bringing of him under his own roof might more justly, more naturally at least, be interpreted as a good omen. Unhappily Vincent had no one to place this line of argument before him. His determined reticence with regard to his former life placed it out of his daughter's power to offer him the consolation of a kind and sympathizing counsellor, and now, in the extremity of distress forced upon him by his diseased imagination, he shrank with threefold horror from making her his confidante. "Poor Rose," he thought: "the bolt will fall soon enough as it is, without my cruelly subjecting her to the agony of suspense."

And so conscience made a coward of Vincent Fleming, as, we are told, it makes cowards of us all. The blood he had shed in the heyday of his youth and dissipated folly was heavy on his soul: like the fancied spot on the "little hand" of Macbeth's wife, it would not come out. He was sorry, he always had been sorry for his sin; but his sorrow was of the sort that "worketh death." And before you, reader, condemn our poor infirm friend for his pusillanimity, think whether there may not be, in your history, passages which will not bear thinking over, events which you keep locked up jealously in your own breast, which, by-and-by, ten, twenty, forty years hence, may recoil upon your memory, and wake it into almost unendurable torment. "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?"

The one and only efficient remedy for this heart disease is in the merciful hand of the great Physician; and happily he is alike able and willing to dispense it, "without money and without price." Listen to his invitation, O wounded one: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I WILL GIVE YOU REST."

#### OUR STREET IN ERZEROU.

JOURNEYING from Trebizond, on the Black Sea, to my consular post in Northern Persia, I spent some days in Erzeroum, some recollections of which, as recorded in my journal at the time, may interest the readers of "The Leisure Hour."

The first sight of Erzeroum was quite in unison with the desolate country we had plodded through during many tedious days. Everything seemed dilapidated and ruinous. The houses, shaken by earthquakes, look as if on the point of falling. The streets are rough and dirty. The population may amount to forty thousand, of whom three-fifths are Mohammedans, the other two-fifths comprising orthodox and Catholic Armenians,

Greeks, Russians, and other strangers. Instead of giving a handbooky and gazetteer-like account of the place, I will attempt a sketch of the street in which I took up my abode, with passing notes on the people.

Our street in Erzeroum is a long one, with a graveyard at one end and a graveyard at the other; but, as graveyards are cheerfully ornamental, and even used as places of amusement, in Turkey, that matters not. It is broad, and chiefly inhabited by Armenians. The houses in general have an upper story and flat roofs, green with weeds, and covered with caked cow-dung, the ordinary fuel of the country; and of which more anon. Down our street runs a gutter, on the sides of which deep pits for the manufacture of the said "tezik," or animal fuel, abound, and where there are several canine and feathered tribes, whose members live on the garbage thrown into the sewer-like stream. At day-break Armenian damsels, coarse-featured, hard-handed, and bare-footed, open their doors, and begin their diurnal labours, which never appear to cease. Life seems to be one perpetual washing-day to them—not for themselves, for, I say it with regret, they are singularly dirty in their persons—but for all the pots and pans, stools, tables, linen, etc., in their establishments. Occasionally they are seen with their aprons of Babylonian hue, and kerchief-covered locks, selecting tezik on the roofs of their abodes. They seem thoroughly hard-working women, who have been taught from their birth that man is the lord of creation, and may smoke his pipe in peace, but that mother Eve's descendants of her own sex must labour. The said lord goes out in the morning (whither I know not: perhaps he has a shop in the bazaar), and comes home late to dinner; after which he blows a cloud in the cool of the evening, and inhales the perfumes of the rivulet which courses down our street, and which would infallibly cause a pestilence in any other place than Erzeroum, where the pure mountain air neutralizes to a great extent the effects of the negligence and apathy of its inhabitants. As soon as Mr. Boghos (or whatever his Armenian name may be) has left the house, out sallies his wife or his daughter, and over goes a pail of refuse into the general receptacle. Her arrival is the signal for huge, ugly dogs, who have been hitherto calmly reposing in the shade, to rush to the spot and endeavour to extract from the heap some stray bone or bit of meat. Woe to the canine interloper who, without belonging to the fraternity, dares to intrude on their repast: he is instantly shaken and severely bitten by the dogs of our street, who have for sovereign a *canis* of huge size and despotic temperament—an absolute monarch, rather more so, in fact, than the Czar of Muscovy.

I once witnessed the behaviour of one of his canine courtiers. He was evidently a toady—a base, sycophantic flatterer. He approached his master, who had stretched himself in the shade, near my lodging. He approached him, I say, not in an independent and republican way, but sideways, wrinkling up his nose and showing his teeth, grinning and wagging his tail the while. When he reached the feet of the canine autocrat, he sunk down as if overpowered by the splendour of the presence, and then, rolling over on his back, looked unutterable humility. This behaviour found favour in the eyes of the big dog—for even dogs are not proof against flattery—and he graciously rose from his recumbent posture, smelt his subject in token of approval, and then trotted off in search of victuals, accompanied by his slave. The fowls and oxen live in the houses in our street, and are turned out at dawn. The latter go to graze: the former encamp on the banks of the gutter, and appropriate to themselves

the vegetable part of the house-sweepings; the meat refuse belonging to the dogs, and the rest being common property. Each tribe of fowls is governed by a cock, who is as despotic as his four-footed neighbour, and wages war with all crows and sparrows who venture on his domain. Sometimes he has a difference of opinion with the dogs, who immediately banish him from their territory, whither, however, he soon returns.

Our street is decidedly the Belgravia of Erzeroum: almost all the consuls live in it; and everybody knows what a consul is in Turkey. It is, moreover, sanctified by the presence of an Armenian bishop. There is a hotel in it, too, kept by a Greek woman, whose light-heeled French husband has returned to *la belle France*, and abandoned her to her fate. She bears her misfortune with equanimity: report, indeed, says that her husband was of so bad a character that she has not lost much. However that may be, she is fat, and tolerably well-to-do in the world. She is the best cook in Erzeroum, and had the honour of entertaining the writer. She, moreover, has a *table-d'hôte*, at which sharp Mr. M——, the English Consular Interpreter, Mr. C—— de la C——, the French ditto, and Mr. Francisco, retailer of wines, etc., dine daily. Amongst our magnates are the English, French, and Russian consuls. This last is a Pole, I will call him Z——, who supplies Russian passports and protections, which vary in price according to the rank and pecuniary resources of the purchaser. The buyer is generally an Armenian, who does not care so much for extortion (to which he is, perhaps, more exposed in Russia than in Turkey), but who cannot understand the way in which the Osmanlis treat the Rayah Christians. He knows that Russian officials are often tyrannical and corrupt, and that, by becoming their subject, he places himself in their hands; but he is at the same time aware that, when he has obtained their protection, he can walk *la tête haute* without fear of maltreatment or abuse from the first dirty Mussulman boy who thinks fit to insult him, and he prefers paying a little more for the privilege.

The so-called Christians here are for the most part an unsatisfactory set, and little entitled to the sympathies of Englishmen. They are as intolerant as the Turks themselves (witness the cowardly attack which the Armenians, incited by their priests, made some years ago on the American Protestant Mission). They are over-sharp in commercial matters, whilst dastardly and cringing in manner. They call Protestants "Franc-maçons," and their "papas," or priests, teach them that Protestants are a pack of atheists who have neither "foi, ni loi, ni lieu, ni Dieu." These currish dispositions are partly innate, but chiefly owing to Turkish oppression during a series of ages; and I see no hope of things bettering, because the mass of the Osmanlis persist in ignoring the Sultan's orders, and would return altogether to the old system to-morrow if they dared. As it is, they treat the Christians who are admitted to the municipal council, or "mejlis," like dogs, avoid every courtesy towards them, and never ask their advice. The consequence is, that the old hatred arises in the hearts of the Christians; they see plainly that neither justice nor honesty is to be hoped for from the Turks, and they fly for refuge to that paternal potentate, the Czar of all the Russias, who now numbers among his subjects a very large proportion of the Christian population. Many of the Armenians who were taken to Russia in Paskiewitch's time have returned as Russian subjects, and of course do not care a fig for the Pacha. In addition to these are the numerous Muscovite *protégés* of Mr. Z——, who, as

already mentioned, sells the inestimable privilege of being a Muscovite citizen for fees varying from four roubles (our consul's Armenian groom purchased immunity from taxation and allegiance to the Sultan at that price) to fifty pounds.

Mr. Z—— has good reasons for his proceedings: 1st, the interest of his master; 2nd, the necessity under which he finds himself of supporting a wife and family of ten children on the insufficient salary allowed him by Russia. When Mouravieff was besieging Kars, Z—— had already been named Governor of Erzeroum, his ten years' experience in the pachalik being held as a sufficient qualification for so important a post. Unfortunately, the old adage about many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip was verified in his case, and he was obliged to return as a simple consul; nevertheless, his appointment may be carried out some day.

Were it not that the progress of Russia in these countries is to be deprecated, as directly opposed to our interests, I would say, for one, "Let any govern the land sooner than the Turks." The present governor, Arif Pacha, has a relative high in place at Constantinople; and even if he is removed, as has often happened to other pachas, at the representation of the British Embassy, the old trick will be repeated, and he will get a better place. Hardly a rogue expelled by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's influence but has in the end benefited by it, and been treated as a martyr to the *giaour*, and a man worthy of reward, as an upholder of the good old Osmanli customs of oppression, fanaticism, intolerance, and bribery. The disgraced pacha's sole punishment is a short deprivation of office, which only lasts until the people at Stamboul can find him another good post, and thereby pocket the usual bribe which every governor is expected to give previous to his nomination. The ministers thus kill two birds with one stone: they enrich themselves, provide again for their brother, and laugh in their sleeves at the foreign ambassador, who has been green enough to believe it possible to get injustice punished in Turkey, and has written home numerous despatches to convince the Downing Street people that Turkey is at length *dans la voie du progrès*, thanks to the untiring vigilance of their representative. The fact is, that until a change in this system be insisted on by all the European Powers, the "Hatt-i Hoomayoon" will remain a dead letter, and the Osmanlis will continue to evade the fulfilment of their promises, and screen criminals of their own faith.

I made the acquaintance of the Greek bishop of the district at our consul's house. He was a sharp-looking, hook-nosed, black-bearded, elderly man, attended by two scrubby-looking satellites, who treated him with great respect. After partaking of the usual pipes and coffee, he mentioned a recent Mohammedan outrage on the corpse of a Christian at Erzingian, and said that, as usual, no sort of redress could be obtained. The French consul will of course show the intense interest he takes in the matter, by writing a powerful despatch to his Embassy about it. He is quite right; because really so very few fit subjects for correspondences occur at Erzeroum, that consuls often incur great risk of being accused of want of zeal.

I must almost declare that no one can be trusted here. If you give a servant ten piastres to spend on your account, he will, if possible, cheat you out of nine. He has not even the amount of conscience which Hindoo servants possess. I never knew one of these latter plunder money placed in his keeping, although he will take it out of you when you order him to make a pur-

chase. A Levantine servant will rob on all occasions; he costs ten times as much as a "Hindustani," and in most instances he is thoroughly lazy, and unwilling to learn. From Levantine servants to Levantine consuls is but a step: as are the private, so are the public servants. It was not, and is not the least vicious part of our consular system in these parts, that our consuls should have been chosen amongst men of mixed birth—English, perhaps, in name and language, but utterly Levantine at heart. They know all the languages of the country, for they are born there; but they also have all its failings, and, being allowed to trade, to eke out their scanty salaries, they make no scruple of employing their consular influence to enable them to make better bargains. Many make a trade of the sale of protections, although not to such an extent as heretofore. Their numerous intermarriages give them a unity of roguery; and so great is their cunning, that they can seldom be detected in acts of downright dishonesty. Clever they are, almost all, obliging and civil in most cases; but I never yet met one who could be trusted, as we say in Scotland, farther than a bull could be thrown by the tail. It is some consolation to know that Government is endeavouring to reform the system. May our rulers rid us of Levantine consuls, who have hitherto lain like an incubus on the national honour, and caused the British name to be a by-word amongst the Turks! One consul of my acquaintance boasted, in my presence, that on the occasion of a contract with the French during the last war, the oxen furnished by him having been disapproved of by the French inspecting officer, he had caused his servants to walk the animals about in the sun, and then (as he elegantly expressed it) blow them out with water. They were then brought back and accepted by the Frenchman, who took their bloatedness for good condition. Several of them died in the slings whilst being hoisted on board; but, as Mr.— observed, that didn't matter to him, as they had been weighed and approved of. The same individual avowed that he had *done* a green English merchant, who had come to him as consul, out of £124, on a sum of something less than £500, in a matter of exchange; and the worst of it is, that although these facts are patent to all, and although consular tyranny is in most instances greater than that of the Turks, no redress can be had. The Levantines are much too clever to put themselves within the grip of the Foreign Office. Unfortunately, no immediate remedy presents itself. These men are the masters of the situation, because Government cannot do without them; and they go on causing Great Britain to be generally discredited. I sincerely trust that they may soon be replaced by honest Englishmen: it would then be seen that the same averseness to Asiatic intrigue, and the same straightforward policy, which has proved more than a match for the crooked wiles of Indian rulers, will meet with full success in Turkey.

Our street is not free from inconveniences: there are strings of camels and mules, which make it the dustiest thoroughfare in dusty Erzeroum; and countless arabas, bringing beams of wood from Soghanli Dag, with squeaking wheels, which afflict the ear with sounds in comparison to which the noise of a penny trumpet is harmony, pass under my window.

There is rejoicing in Erzeroum. For months no rain had fallen. Provisions had doubled in price. Erzeroum housekeepers looked gloomy, and feared that they would be unable to make both ends meet this winter. Day after day deceptive clouds gave promises which they failed to fulfil: at last, however, rain *has* come; "a gentle rain" to refresh the parched-up soil.

I visit the Custom House with my brother consul. We pass through a gateway, and under a long vaulted passage, on either side of which are store-rooms for goods, and reach a walled garden, in which the Turks have erected a wooden kiosque. Like everything Turkish, it is rickety. It has in front a seedy-looking fountain with a tin apparatus, which is obstinate, and will persist in squirting the water in wrong directions. There is an unwashed Osmanli seated on unwashed cushions, enjoying the sweetness of doing nothing, with the inevitable chibouque in his mouth. He does not stir, or show in any way that he is aware of our presence; this, however, does not afflict us: I even show that I consider myself at home, by entering with booted feet and squatting down beside him. The garden is a wilderness: there are a few trees, and lots of weeds, but no flowers. It is a garden by courtesy. We rise to go, and I tread (of course accidentally) on my Mohammedan neighbour's toes. He has corns, I fear, for he loses his dignity and makes a huge grimace. Good-bye, old fellow. If you have corns, cut them, and be civil to all people, even to giaours.

We go to see the Tchift Minar. The building of which they form a part has been a Christian church, and afterwards a mosque: it is now a powder-magazine. The minarets from which it derives its name are said to be the work of Persian hands. They have lost their summits by an earthquake, but are still very pretty. They consist of two fluted columns, built of mixed red and turquoise-coloured bricks, and one of them has a large two-headed eagle carved in basso relievo at its base, perhaps the work of Paskiewitch's soldiers. In proof of my former assertion, with reference to the mode of treating disgraced pachas, I have just heard of two cases in point. The first is that of Selim Pacha, who commanded at Erzeroum during the siege of Kars, and whose timid behaviour in refusing to advance to the relief of the garrison was in a great measure the cause of the fall of the latter place. He has just been named Commandant of the Imperial Guards, as a reward for past services! The second instance is that of Husein Pacha, who, having been appointed, through Lord Stratford, General Williams's coadjutor at Kars, was turned out by the General because the bold Briton found it utterly impossible to work with a man of his stamp. He was afterwards a member of the frontier Commission, as being a pacha whom the Sultan delighted to honour, and distinguished himself, as formerly, by oppressing the villagers right and left. He even pulled down houses for firewood. Of this I have the evidence of two English members of the Commission. Such is life in Erzeroum, and such is the lot of the people of Asiatic Turkey.

## TEN DAYS IN BISCAY AND NAVARRE.

### II.

We spent our Sunday in Pampelona. Early in the morning we went for a quiet walk, after taking a cup of tea or chocolate in our rooms. The violent sirocco and whirlwinds of dust had given place to a rather fresh, cool breeze (I fancy this town gets a good share of wind); but it was pleasant and genial, with no keen edge. The view from the ramparts was splendid. I had no idea, in the haze of Saturday, what an extent of mountains was visible; the deep blue of those more distant heights, and the warmer tints of those nearer, rising from the plateau on which the eminence stands on which Pampelona is built. The river, fringed with cypress,



poplar, and elm trees, runs just below the fortifications. After a service in our rooms, and the "almovyar," or lunch, as it would be more properly called, for which one is very ready at eleven, having only had a morsel of dry bread and a cup of tea at eight, we separated, as the others wished to walk, and I was tired and required a quiet time. Later in the afternoon I joined them in the "Paseo," or promenade close to the hotel. I put on for this walk—as it was now become quite mild, yet without much sun—the new mantilla I had purchased the day before. As I went down-stairs I peeped into the kitchen to ask one of the women if it was put on right, and the fat landlady and one of the others rushed to look, and to insist on rearranging it, and sent me forth with expressions of satisfaction. It is a singular thing that a mantilla is a dress which becomes almost every woman, of whatever age or complexion: nearly every one looks graceful and modest in it, which is no small advantage. Elderly women, who in a bonnet full of flowers would look hideous, appear dignified and handsome with the black lace folds round their heads. I tried in vain to leave a tract anywhere, while out on the Paseo. It was too public: every eye would have seen me leave it. Early in the morning I had popped an "espera" into the arena of the bull-fights, and in an empty cart, and in a few of the empty sentry-boxes, and so on; but opportunities were few, and priests many and curious.



A BISCAYAN CART.

We arranged to start on Monday at ten o'clock; but Don H— was bent on my making a sketch of a girl from a distant valley of Navarre up in the Pyrenees, called Ronçal, where a peculiar costume of great antiquity is retained. This young woman was sent to Pampelona for education, being engaged to marry a man of rather higher station than her own, though only a shepherd, as are all the people of that primitive valley, but a wealthy man in his line, a sort of sheep-farmer. I presume Don H— took great pains to hunt up this girl. He persuaded her to come at half-past eight o'clock to my room, and I painted till we had to start. A lovely creature was Dolores: I could not do

her justice. Her sweet, innocent face was at once intelligent and childlike in its expression; not very dark, like the southern Spanish style, but rather blooming and full, with dark eyes of exceeding gentleness and brightness. A friend who had charge of her accompanied her, but did not wear the costume. The fair betrothed was nineteen years old. She was learning to read, and had been for some months. After giving her a parcel of chocolate at his suggestion, I added a small trinket of my own, which pleased her yet more, and took care to wrap it carefully in a pink paper on which some hymns were printed. After bidding farewell to the sweet Dolores and the kind old Spaniard, we bade also farewell to the beautiful little town.

I must not omit, however, a notice of my private walk about the city previous to my painting work. It is a good thing to be early; for not only does the early bird pick up worms, but the early sower may strew seed before the eyes of the fowler are about. I rose before the rest (at half-past five o'clock, indeed), and, leaving my companions still in bed, set out alone into the town, and made my way towards the little market-place. Early as it was, the people were all alive, but there were not so many priests about, and I popped a tract or two into empty entries, and gave one to a young woman in a confectioner's shop where I bought some chocolate. Then near the market-place I observed a young man of a pleasant face, sensible and good, in a shop where as yet he was doing nothing; so, making a pretext of buying a bit of coarse linen, I offered him a tract after a few words of conversation, and had the delight of seeing it gladly accepted. The old market-women I dared not try; they are so bigoted, and watch one another; so, after buying an enormous lemon, I returned to the hotel.

The day we left Pampelona proved the most lovely of all our lovely days: both weather and scenery were so delicious. I spare you descriptions, for one mountain pass has so much in common with others. I will only say briefly, that the Spanish mountain country is truly splendid in many parts, and if not equal in some points to that of Switzerland, the inferiority is nearly made up in others, such as a finer climate and more transparent colouring. In flowers it seems deficient, but higher up a great many are found, especially earlier in the year. This is summer for Spain; and rarely do we poor Britons get any summer weather to compare with it. Well, at a little scrap of a village where we stopped to bait we had a very capital time. We had brought a cold fowl (and a tough one it was) from Pampelona, as this was not a place where any inn was found, only fodder for cattle, etc.; but we procured some of the excellent bread baked by the good woman of the house. I sketched the curious old kitchen, much to the amusement of the dame and her son, who watched with lively interest every stroke. We sat on the hill-side by a little stream to eat; and the young man of the house sat down to look at us, on seeing which I gave him an "espera," which he read attentively till his mother called him down for some work, and then he pocketed it with "mil gracias." While the carriage was getting ready I made a likeness of the mother, to her own and her son's great satisfaction. I said she must have been very handsome. "Ah, yes," she replied, naïvely; "but it is so many years ago!" She had (as most of the Navarrese peasants in this district) a working-dress so ugly as to require the really handsome faces which many have, to appear even tolerable: the hair dragged tight off the face, and a kerchief, brown, black, or some ugly colour, tied over it, and

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A PEASANT-GIRL OF THE LOWER PYRENEES.  
(Near Pau, the Val d'Ossau, the Pic de Midi in the distance.)

brown cotton gowns. On Sunday I fancy gayer things appear, and a red petticoat is here and there sported; but on the whole their costume has nothing picturesque about it.

A carabineer (one of the men who guard travellers at night from robbers; for these passes are only safe by day) now came up and asked for his portrait. He stood capitally. While I was engaged in drawing, up came a troop of mules with three men, who rushed to see what was going on. They highly applauded, and stood looking on and cutting jokes at the ugly nose of the poor carabineer. One of them presently took my hand, not rudely, but with Spanish courtesy of manner, and shook it, saying, "Now, Señora, it is my turn." I was sorry I

had not time, for it was more than time to go on; but I talked a little to him as well as I could about a certain "libricits muy bueno," which I offered him. He could hardly believe it was a "regolo," or present, at first, and seemed to think it was only lent; but at last he understood, and thanked me warmly, putting it into a pocket-book with his money. He was the only one of all the set who could read. The carabineer looked so sad as he said he could not read. I was grieved for the poor fellow.

In the evening we reached a sweet little village called Mogaire. I have a view of it, which is one of the best I have got; for not only was the colouring very favourable, but I was not hurried. I sat on a

wooden bridge, and drew and painted for a delightful hour or more. The air was quite balmy as it blew softly across from the garden of a wealthy marquis near the river, whose roses grew down to the water in rich profusion. The fonda was clean and comfortable, and the people extremely civil. They gave us an excellent dinner. We fancy the hostess must have been cook in the great house one day, her cooking was so superior to what you would expect in a mere village. The rooms, though small, were decent, and the linen clean and plentiful. The whitewashed walls did not even boast a looking-glass in any of the chambers, but we dressed without its aid. I rose at a very early hour, and went down to sketch a pretty little stone bridge over a branch stream of the river. I went first to the kitchen for a drink of milk, and there saw the morning toilet of the two nice little girls of the house. They came down in petticoats and chemises (a jacket being added later in the day, if not too hot). The hair was knotted in tight plaits, and as rough as a furze-bush, but a smooth of the hand was all it got. Then the elder washed the little one, Tomasita, by dipping her hands in water and rubbing her face very slightly, ditto to hands, without soap, and this was all. The cocher said to me that the elder girl, Astora, wished for a little book, he having told her I had some; but I only gave her a hymn, fearing to trust a child with an "espera." I made a sketch at the other side of the house, and while thus occupied there came a respectable-looking man with a leather bag, as if he were a letter-carrier or something of the sort, and stood at the bridge waiting for some one; so I took occasion to have a little chat with him, first offering an "espera," which was gladly accepted. I asked if he had ever read of a certain man called Matamoros. No, he never had. I gave a brief account, as well as my limited language would allow, of his imprisonment and its cause. If this man would have consented to give up his Bible, I said, and to say whatever the priests told him, he would be safe now, instead of in "el carcel;" but he would not, because he knew the Bible was the word of God. All men have a right to read it, therefore. "Ah, la palabra de Dios," said the man, "we know little of that here. We have not the word of God here," he added, with a half-sorrowful, half-puzzled look; then, turning to his book, he began reading some of it, and presently said, "This is good," pointing to a text quoted. "Well, that is from the word of God; and this also," said I, pointing to another passage. "It is all true in this little book, and you will find much of God's word in it." This was about the most important part of our talk; but it was renewed more than once, as I was drawing not far from where he was reading. We left Mogaire with regret, for it is a charming spot; but the long journey before us made it needful to get off soon after seven o'clock. I gave two more "esperas," one to the landlord and another to a friend who was chatting with him at the door. A fine hot sun got up in the course of an hour or two (the morning had been cloudy), and was to me very agreeable.

At mid-day, after a drive through very fine scenery, perhaps a little overwooded, but still very agreeable, we came to a small place, whose name I forget, where the horses had to bait. It was the last village of Navarre on this side, and a very picturesque spot, full of old gabled houses, built with wooden shutters instead of glass, for the most part trellised with vines, and altogether picture-like. We scrambled up a bank just outside the village, to get under a spreading beech-tree, and there made our breakfast, or lunch, with the delicious white Spanish bread—hot from the baker's oven in the

village below—and water as cool as heart could wish from a neighbouring spring, added to a fowl brought from Mogaire. I left the rest, as soon as refreshed enough, to sketch some houses below. While standing in the shade to get out of the glare, which was considerable, I was accosted by a woman carrying a pitcher. She thought I looked warm, and showed true Spanish courtesy by instantly pouring out a glass of cider which her pitcher contained, and offering it to me. I think the courteous manners here are remarkable, and the politeness to women is quite different from what we find in France.

The route now lay along the beautiful little river Bidason, which divides France from Spain in this part. The steep cliffs are fringed with box and heather, and have charming variety and beauty. We saw a curious way of bringing boats up the rivers here. They are flat-bottomed, the water being very shallow, and the men punt them down, carrying oxen in them, and then take a cargo of stores for the glass-works somewhere in Spain, and make the oxen wade, drawing them along up the stream. The effect of a boat drawn by oxen is the oddest possible. The wind was just enough to blow a good deal of dust up this day, and soon after re-entering Biscay we stopped at my request at a pretty quinta, or farm, to ask for water. I got down to ask for it, as the best able to speak, and such a sweet group I saw: a benevolent elderly woman, with three pretty girls, all washing at a rivulet near the house. I asked for water, and they brought me cider with most courteous hospitality. These were Spanish Basques, as much handsomer than the French Basques as is generally said to be the case. I talked a little with the old dame, and, finding her daughters could read, offered a hymn page to her for them, the one containing "There is a fountain," and several others. She looked rather doubtful, apparently having never heard of a hymn in her life, and said, "What is it?" I said, "Listen: I will read," and read her a verse of "How sweet the name." "Is that good?" "Si, si, buena," she replied, and took my hand, which she warmly shook, looking into my face with a pleased yet wistful expression in her fine eyes. I never saw a sweeter countenance. May the "nombre dulce" become dear to her though His own goodness and grace, making light to shine in a dark place! And so ends my Spanish journal; for at nine we returned to France, and got to Bayonne that night.

## MEN I HAVE KNOWN.

JOHN BRITTON.

JOHN BRITTON was entirely a self-made man. But he did not exhibit in his boyhood the precocious signs which are usually attributed to such a career; nor was his adolescence passed in pursuits of which it could be predicted that they were promising steps to future social respect and literary reputation. On the contrary, he informs us, in his (unfinished) autobiography, that he was a rough country baker's boy to the age of sixteen, and then immured for nearly six years as an apprentice to a tavern-keeper and wine-cooper in a cellar in Clerkenwell, from which he emerged to be an ardent disciple of the political spouting-clubs then abounding in London, and most of which were evil schools for the information of youth. In these John took as active a part as he could; but his finances were low, and, perhaps fortunately for him, his poverty did not permit him to enter further into the arcana of such dangerous dens. From them, however, he acquired the gift of ready and fluent speaking, which

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he retained to the end of his long life; always being rather exuberant in words, which, however, were, on the whole, facile and to the purpose.

His simple account of his weary uphill work in the cellar of the "Jerusalem Tavern" showed that it was only from bad to worse, as compared with his previous native village life in Kington, Wilts, from his birth in 1771 to his removal in 1787. His father was a sulky fellow, and addicted to drink; his mother, though a sober woman with good qualities, belonged to a family prone to gusts of passion amounting to frenzy; he was himself a mere run-about, with a small modicum of irregular schooling; and the household lapsed into ruin. These, as I have suggested, were unlikely premises for a respectable and prosperous sequel; nor was the succeeding underground occupation of bottling so many dozens of liquor, during twelve or fourteen hours every day, of a kind to improve the prospect. In short, he was got rid of by his uncle, his mother's brother moving in a genteel circle, and left to his destiny. So he learned nothing of his trade; and the unmitigated monotony he describes as plunging him into bad health, and a state of morbid indifference which benumbed all his faculties, and threw him—

"Like a villainous flag upon the stream,  
To rot himself in motion."

Yet there must have been something of better purpose in the lad; for, besides the little he could manage at early morn, he used to take snatches of reading by candlelight in the cellar, from ten o'clock to midnight, storing his mind with Hervey's "Meditations," Young's "Night Thoughts," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and the "Life of Peter the Great." At length, released from thralldom, with two guineas instead of a covenanted twenty to begin the world with, behold the ultimate historian, antiquary, topographer, critic, biographer, and essayist, cast adrift upon London to carve out a livelihood, with no other requisites for success than his very limited acquaintance with coo-perage and very rudimentary knowledge of letters.

I do not think Wiltshire is very famous for distinguished men. Nevertheless, Britton was patriotically partial to his native county; and gave him the real dairy produce or Stonehenge for a theme, not forgetting the steeple nor the chapter-house of Salisbury Cathedral, and he would discourse magniloquently on the nutritive produce, the mysterious antiquity, and the architectural beauties of his county. So warm was he when Wilts was the topic, that he once almost quarrelled with me for hinting that the cheeses were not, as originally, in the form of Cheshire or Gloucester, but in the shape of the crown of a hat, in order to evade the odium of the old joke about the Wiltshire peasants trying to rake the reflection of the moon.

From the cellar at Clerkenwell, Britton rose to be an attorney's clerk at fifteen shillings a week, and fagged at the desk for three long years. In another attorney's office he passed one year, at the munificent allowance of twenty shillings weekly. It was whilst thus engaged that he so ardently pursued his predilection for publicity. Nightly did he attend, and as frequently as possible did he take part in the discussions of the debating societies and other meetings of spouting aspirants, to some of whom, in after-life, the facility acquired in speaking was an advantage, but to the generality affording simply the means for a display of vanity and folly, or leading to idleness and mischief, with many evils in their train. Britton escaped the worse consequences, his ambition being gratified by the applause bestowed on certain comic recitations with which he favoured his audiences; and the thirst he acquired to become an actor was satiated by

a few attempts at private theatricals. At this period of dangerous trial he tells us he used to dine respectably for ninepence, met decent people, and made the acquaintance of the famous Chevalier d'Eon, who appeared in the world engaged in important concerns, alternately, as he listed, or the occasion required, either as a gentleman or a lady. Fortunately Britton knew him in the former capacity, for he reports himself as very readily inflammable by love. In short, his first long journey was not a tour to study churches, but a walk to Plympton, in order to persuade the waiting-maid of the Clerkenwell cellarman's daughter to go to church with him in the character of a bride. But the course of his love did not run smooth. The faithless flirt jilted the amorous attorney's clerk and married another; and he, the woe-begone, forgot the apposite healing maxim of Dibdin's song, and did "take it like a lubber," for he confesses that he walked back again to London, "meditating suicide" and drinking "rum and milk."

He thus got to be twenty-seven years of age before what appears, after all, to have been his innate moving principle came into distinct operation. And yet, as I have remarked, speechifying, and reciting funny compositions, and performing underling characters on the stage, were strange preliminaries to this development of apparently another nature. Musty antiquities, and dry topography, were anomalous changes of pursuit; and the dramatic and romantic aspirations were only tolerably well exchanged for a relish for the pleasures of society, and an aptitude for real instead of imitative enjoyments.

Smaller literature, however, diversified the greater inclinations, and he exercised his talent for writing as at the clubs he had done for speaking. He became a contributor to periodicals of the day, some of which have succumbed to the common lot, though one or more may yet survive under modified circumstances, and can be referred to as containing the earliest essays of John Britton. The "Attic Miscellany" received his unclassic criticisms; and the "Monthly Mirror" reflected his various humours, as they were inspired by his experience of the publican's cellar, the attorneys' offices, and the vivid disputations of the clubs—those pot-house discussions of morality, and rambling disquisitions on every difficult question in learning, politics, and theology, which agitated the minds of men at a very unsettled and stormy epoch. The "Adventures of Pizarro" marked his first separate flight into the region of print, and the commencement of his extended literary life. Henceforward he mixed largely with the world, and made himself many friends and admirers, sprinkled with a few adversaries and detractors. And so it was like to be; for, through a long course of years, his dealings were varied and multifarious, and he had to do with some difficult classes of men, such as authors, artists, and publishers. Sometimes he would differ with the latter, and become his own publisher; and then, as is usually the case, he did not succeed much better, and the only gain was that he could not quarrel with himself.

His first grand business excursion, near the end of the last century, brought him into close contact with these three combined representatives of the press. He had broken into a new, or at any rate only partially travelled field, and, going to work methodically, he beat his way very cleverly through it. His good sense and practical taste contributed much to the value of his publications, as he displayed the best judgment in associating with his undertakings a succession of draughtsmen and engravers the majority of whom have risen to the highest reputation in their several lines of art. The names of Le Keux, Pugin, Havell, Bartlett, among others, afford sufficient

proof of this judicious adoption of aids to popularity, and enhanced the attraction of all Mr. Britton's principal productions.

During more than half a century many and continuous were they. The "Beauties of Wiltshire" began the career, and particular features and celebrated men of his native county furnished subjects for his pen to the end of his active life. "Rees's Cyclopædia," "The Penny Cyclopædia," and other publications of Mr. Charles Knight (on whose strenuous efforts in the cause of the diffusion of useful knowledge Mr. Britton bestows a glowing eulogy), and the "Annual Review," were the receptacles of many of these articles; whilst, latterly, the "Gentleman's Magazine," the "Magazine of Fine Arts," and the "Builder," afterwards so ably edited by his pupil and friend,\* were the chief depositories of his obituaries and other miscellaneous effusions.

I should estimate that more than fifty volumes of topography led the way to, or alternated with, the truly great works on Christian architecture and the cathedrals and cathedral antiquities of England which proceeded, year after year, from the author's prolific enterprise. Not only was he never idle, but he was always vigilantly busy. *Nulla dies sine linea* seemed to be his motto; for there was a perpetual succession of volumes, pamphlets, and papers, which kept the author's rising name and valuable services for ever before the public eye. And this is an important concern in authorship. If you do not take care to keep yourself conspicuous in the crowd, the crowd will run over you, trample you down, and leave you to be lost sight of and forgotten. The task was onerous in Britton's earlier days: railway trains and railway stations, with puffs and placards, have made it easier now.

In Britton himself no slackness was there found. Ancient and modern, cronlechs, and topics of the hour, nothing came amiss to his restlessly inquiring and active spirit. Stonehenge, Junius, Shakespeare, Pizarro, Chatterton, Nelson, John Aubrey, Sir John Soane, Bath Abbey and Fonthill Abbey, the Tower of London and the London Colosseum, Celtic Kist-vaens, and Paris in 1828, form ingredients of a medley hardly to be exceeded by any instance I know of varied talent in a single individual. I had nearly forgotten. There were lighter matters, and poetry too, not of the foremost order, but enough to show the comprehensive versatility of the stirring mind. And our wonder augments when we consider the origin and progress of this accomplished fact. For the rude country boy, the hard-working cellerman, the neophyte of noisy clubs, to stand forth far above the universal herd for capacity, astuteness, attainments, and the power of rendering them instructive to the world, is a spectacle rarely to be seen within the verge and scope of humanity. Nature asserted her dominion. What Britton might have been with education and scholarly training is a problem for curious conjecture. As it was, he was a remarkable celebrity, with a name to be repeated with praise by future generations.

His personal appearance was not imposing. On the contrary, he was petit, his manner a little brusque, and his countenance boyish, even to the end. Neither was the character of his mind of a high or solid cast. The

soul befitted the body. He was easily offended, and, when provoked or prejudiced, not very measured in his terms of resentment or reprobation. On the other hand, he was warmly alive to good offices, and gratefully sensible to kindness, of which he was blessed with no scanty share from considerate and wealthy friends, who appreciated the sterling value of his works, and liked the conversation of the old man, whose closing years they gilded with hospitable solicitude and the comforts so needful to soothe the ills attendant on the decline of life. Among the chief of these were several of our greatest builders: Mr. Thomas and Mr. William Cubitt, and Mr. Grisell (of whom I have spoken in others of these brief sketches), and other well-known persons, such as Dr. John Conolly, Mr. Humphrey, q.c., Mr. William Tooke, Mr. Charles Hill, the co-sheriff of London with Mr. W. Cubitt, and Mr. Nathaniel Gould, the American merchant, who was indeed the prime mover of an association which, during ten years, brightened the existence of the object of their unremitting regards. The origin of this society, or club, was such an honour as few living authors have enjoyed. A dinner entertainment, to celebrate his seventy-fourth birthday and acknowledge the extent and utility of his publications, was given to Mr. Britton, at Richmond, by personal friends and admirers of his literary labours, at which nearly a hundred gentlemen "assisted." There was much good cheer and much post-prandial speaking. The enjoyment really partook of the feast of reason and the flow of soul. But Richmond banquets, especially where the company is numerous, and trains and omnibuses in request for departure, are not suited for a full indulgence in these pleasant laudatory emotions. To confess the truth, their manifestation overshot the short time for ex-urban festivities, and I and other guests were obliged to leave, for the sake of conveyance, in the midst of a very touching, but, for the resources of the occasion, rather lengthy address by an excellent dignitary of the Church. Our loss of the *finale*, coupled with the genial and genuine gratification of the meeting, seemed to have suggested to its warm-hearted chairman, Mr. Gould, the idea of founding a Britton Club, where a few select intimates, with more time to enjoy it, might continue to administer a continuation of a like nature to the happiness of the social, respected, and worthy old antiquary. The number did not exceed twelve, and the majority I have named above. They assembled during "the season," now and then at attractive spots of resort near town, but generally at their private residences, where the abundant tide of hospitality never ebbed. Several times the Lord Chief Baron honoured them with his presence, and participated in their gaiety and good feeling. To Britton they were the pabulum of life. He looked forward to their meetings; he calculated them and his patriarchal years, and drew horoscopes and hopes. When in the country, away from London, for example at Mr. Grisell's beautiful seat, Norbury Park, he always found a home to refresh his spirit; and he was as brisk as when he walked to Plympton, but with a far different result, neither meditating suicide, nor the antidote, rum and milk. Seriously, however, to Heaven he had indeed cause to be most grateful for bestowing upon him such friendships, to alleviate the rigours of age, and warm its cold pilgrimage to the close.

I have alluded to a characteristic which was not so amiable as those which recommended him to such welcomes and distinctions, but yet did not provoke the disapprobation which the nude mention of it would generally incur. In no man did I ever witness it less offensive and censurable. He was what is called out-

\* Upon his death a very feeling tribute to his memory appeared from the pen of Mr. George Godwin. Mr. Godwin's youthful connection with Mr. Britton, with respect to Redcliffe Church, Bristol, would seem to have initiated him into the patient investigation and diligent study so needful to the genuine architect, and prepared him for the successful course he is now running. At all events, this brief memoir does honour to the living as to the dead.

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spoken, and sometimes delivered harsh opinions, which were coloured by his own feelings rather than founded on deliberate or abstract justice. A wrong or a fancied wrong, an erroneous view, an unsubstantial report, would serve for a strong dictum. But there was this excuse to palliate the indiscretion: he only blamed what he believed wrong, and he knew no malice. He was quick, and his quickness betrayed him, against the natural bent of his mind, which was charitable and kindly, into ebullitions, the sense of which rarely lasted beyond the period of their utterance. I have, however, reluctantly touched on the subject (for I desire my traits to be the truth), because I have read with regret, in his fragmentary autobiography, passages affecting individuals which I am sure he would have qualified or cancelled had he lived to bestow his ultimate consideration upon that work. His remarks upon Sir John Soane, from whom he suffered a severe disappointment, and Dr. Dibdin, and even the amatory Dr. Lardner, as a curious philosophical coxcomb, are examples of this blemish. But to be out-spoken with envy or rancour is a social crime: to be out-spoken as Britton was amounted to no more than a rashness springing from his active temperament and hasty judgment. Here, then, let us look back on his early years and the process of training he went through, instead of a sound education, and make charitable allowance for his faults.

Among his minor errors I may mention that my old friend was guilty of verse, though not of an order to lift him high in the poetic choir which chirps about the lower slopes of Parnassus. His efforts, indeed, were not ambitious, but generally to promote benevolent purposes, and thence worthy of praise. But he did not waste his time on the Muses when he should have been wisely filling it with useful practical work; and, occasionally, the variations of a lighter literature did credit to his taste and talent. The chief specimens of this may be seen in his "Shakespearean Illustrations," and his inquiry into the authorship of Junius; but, indeed, he was always busy, and taking an earnest interest in passing affairs. The Literary Fund was long an object of his solicitude and zealous support; but plans for new benevolent institutions and establishments for the promotion of the fine arts, and succour to those already in existence, were never long absent from his thoughts and pen; and, so far as lay within his compass, he might fairly be considered a patriotic and liberal friend to all rightful claimants on public sympathies. A paltry pension of seventy-five pounds a year was granted to this voluminous standard author; an amount showing the ministerial estimate of a valuable national instructor as compared with the writers of political satires or trashy party novels. It was, however, some help in his old age, when past work, and when he married his second wife. As a trait of character I may relate that he announced this fact himself at one of the symposia I have described, and sensibly stated that it was no act of senile folly, but the simple adoption of an affectionate nursing friend into the position of a wife, in which she could continue her consoling attentions without attracting the heartless remarks of a sneering world. The union was a very happy one, and the conduct of the lady amply justified the commendation and expectations of her helpmate.

But the end must come. Lively to the last, the season of winter tried the tough constitution, and he was wont to glance forward to its frosts and snows, and anticipate if he might again rejoice with his kind friends in the cherished club renovations of health and spirit. The warning date of fourscore and five arrived. His latest action was to forward to the printer some matter relating

to his friend and neighbour Mr. Baily, the astronomer, and to promise that, after resting for a day or two, he would send somewhat respecting Whittaker and Neele (two of his intimate favourites), intended for the same publication. This was on the 2nd of December, 1856: on the 4th he was taken ill with bronchitis, and four weeks afterwards he died.

A massive stone in the cemetery at Norwood is inscribed with the name JOHN BRITTON.

### WORKING MEN'S CLUBS.

THERE is scarcely any conceivable cause for union and combination among working men which has not, at some time or other, led to their association for the purpose of benefiting themselves by carrying out in practice schemes more or less promising. From time immemorial the labouring and industrial classes have clung to the principle of union as if by instinct, recognising in it, rightly enough, their only real element of power, their only available means of effecting any solid and permanent amelioration of their lot. The history of their associative endeavours, if it could be written, would comprise the veritable history of their order: their virtues of forethought, providence, domestic tenderness, thrift, self-denial, and self-sacrifice; their vices of recklessness, intemperance, selfishness, violence, and cruelty. It would show us that whenever the workmen of Britain had resolved upon carrying out any weighty measure connected with their own interests—whether the measure were a good one or a bad one—they had the power to carry it out to its utmost possible limits, and that they shrunk from no sacrifice in so doing. And we should see the fruits of this all but indomitable spirit, on the one hand, in such noble spectacles as the co-operative stores at Rochdale, the swarms of little freeholds which dot the hill-sides in the neighbourhood of manufacturing towns, and the hundreds of men of wealth and influence who have lifted themselves from the labouring ranks to the social level of their superiors in birth and education; and, on the other hand, we should see it in the hideous records of strikes and turn-outs, darkened with crimes of violence and bloodshed; in trade unions for coercing employers, intimidating workers, and preventing a free trade in labour; and in conspiracies for burning and destroying the property of recalcitrant masters, and for waylaying and murdering (for such things have been) recalcitrant workmen.

So much good and so much evil has arisen out of this power of combination, which, resting in such hands, as it must continue to rest so long as we are a commercial and manufacturing people, is always strong enough, when roused to action, to shake the very foundations of society. Rightly directed, the operations of such a power would be nothing but good for the entire community; but wrongly directed, goaded to action by corrupt agitators, and led on by ignorance, it is a power mighty enough to work irretrievable disaster and woe. Now the tendency of the working men's clubs and institutes, to which we invite the reader's attention in this brief paper, is to inculcate right principles of combination instead of wrong ones; to lead working men to unite for good and worthy objects only, every object being good and worthy which aids in improving their outward condition, in cultivating their mental powers, and in fostering habits of morality and uprightness. They are based upon the conviction that society has nothing to fear, but everything to hope and expect, from the moral and social elevation of the worker. Accordingly, they



seek the means of elevating him; and, recognising the fact that circumstances are often sorely against him, they seek to create new circumstances for him, which shall be free from old hindrances and temptations, and afford him the opportunity, at least, for the development of character, away from corrupting influences and under friendly guidance.

The means adopted in furtherance of these ends are few and practical, and such as by their simplicity commend themselves to those whom they are intended to benefit. In the first place, the club offers to the working man a substitute for the public-house, in the shape of an evening home, where he can pass the hours of his leisure after the toils of the day in a reasonable manner, without being under the necessity of spending a penny of his hard earnings. Here he can enjoy the society of his comrades in a warm and cheerful room; he can smoke his pipe, and can partake of unintoxicating refreshments at a charge suited to his means; he can read the newspapers of the day, or, if he cannot read, may hear them read, or can amuse himself with the current periodicals, or can participate in the innocent excitement of draughts, dominoes, chess, and other games of skill. Exercises out of doors, of a gymnastic or athletic kind, are also available in some of the clubs which have the requisite space at command. These are the mere domestic and personal comforts which are open to all the members, and which, it will be seen, present many of the features of a comfortable home. In return for them the workman pays a penny per week at the utmost—in some clubs the subscription is but half that amount—and, accepting these terms, he is free from the necessity of resorting to the public-house; he can abolish at once, as hundreds have done, his public-house score, and can devote the produce of his labour to a more worthy purpose than that of mere sensual gratification. If he choose, the workman can stop here, making no more use of his club than a traveller does of his inn; and if he does stop here, nobody can deny that he has a very good bargain, a most ample return for his weekly penny. But the club does not stop here: nothing of the kind. For the same weekly penny it offers to its members, in addition to their evening home, evening lectures, evening reading-classes, writing-classes, arithmetic-classes, music-classes, classes for languages and for elementary science, and supplies them with a library of useful books for circulation, which they may carry away for perusal at their leisure. Further, and better, it opens to them Sunday Bible-classes, and religious services adapted to their understanding and to their special need. In a word, the object of the club is to raise the worker out of the slough of ignorance and apathy, and to help him onward in the path of respectability, independence, morality, and true religion.

During the twelve months ending on the 30th of June, 1864, fifty-five of these clubs have been established under the direction of the "Working Men's Club and Institute Union," at 150, Strand, which society volunteers information and counsel to all seeking advice on the subject, and is ready at all times to aid in the formation of such clubs in any part of the kingdom. They have published various small books and papers, which may be regarded as containing the best experience and knowledge hitherto gained in connection with this important movement, and which documents we should quote at some length did we not prefer rather to recommend their purchase and perusal by all interested in the subject. They may be obtained at a trifling cost of Messrs. Bell and Daldy, Fleet Street, or by ordering them of any bookseller in town or country.

In operation these clubs, so far as we can perceive after inspecting many of them, present no unsound aspect, no single element which can be expected to lead to failure. Established for the most part, if not entirely, in the outset, by the contributions of benevolent persons, they are afterwards managed by the working men themselves, and governed on the democratic principle in a manner which precludes the possibility of partiality or corruption of any kind. The men enact their own laws, elect their own committees, by whom the laws are sanctioned, and, as a rule, every man who has been a member three months has a vote. Perhaps the best proof that could be afforded of the excellence of their constitution, and its efficient working, is found in the fact that the working men's club invariably begets other clubs whose operations are carried on within its own circle. The members, all intent to rise, seem equally intent upon helping one another upwards. They inaugurate among themselves the means of doing so. They form associations on the bundle-of-sticks principle—associations differing very variously in different districts as to their objects and details, but essentially alike everywhere in the principle of mutual help. Hence the barrow clubs in the Duck Lane Institute, by the aid of which men are enabled to purchase their barrows instead of hiring them, so that in time they become proprietors without the necessity of incurring obligation to any man; and hence the loan-funds in operation there and in many other places, by which men are enabled to provide themselves with stock, and to start in business, without the incubus of interest upon borrowed capital. There is no limit to be put to the ways in which men acting under such an organization, who know each other's characters, as they must be known from constant association, can thus join hand and purse, and make the strength of all united the strength of each individual member. What shape this species of combination shall hereafter take there is no knowing: one might prognosticate very grand things concerning it, and yet not be mistaken.

The working men's clubs, it is worth remarking and remembering, enjoy one guarantee for permanence, for the lack of which many analogous associations in times past have suffered grievous loss, and many more have even ceased to exist. They can secure their own property; and they do usually secure it, by investing it in the president, treasurer, or other honorary officers of the society as trustees. They owe the means of doing this to the guiding Club and Institute Union in the Strand. The Council of that Union, being frequently applied to for information as to the best means of securing the property of clubs and the rightful appropriation of their funds, caused application to be made to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to authorize the extension of the provisions of the 18 & 19 Vict. c. 23, to working men's clubs and institutes. Sir George Grey complied with their suggestion, and the Council, to use the words of their report for the past year, "have had the pleasure of informing the promoters and managers of these institutions that they can now appoint trustees, and thus protect their property, without the expense of a trust deed, by registering with Mr. Tidd Pratt, under the Friendly Societies Act." This is a privilege of the first importance, inasmuch as, the property being secured, the club cannot be broken up by the acts of seceders, but may continue in existence at the will of the remaining members, however few.

In conclusion, we will take the liberty to add one special reason of a practical kind why philanthropists should interest themselves in the formation and establish-

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ment of working men's clubs in all large towns, and in London particularly. To take the case of London: the influx of working men and labourers of all classes into this huge capital amounts in some seasons to several hundred weekly, and to many thousands in the course of a year. This flow of muscle and sinew to the metropolis is continuous, and never ceases, though it may flag at times, and is to a definite extent, though less than is generally supposed, counterbalanced by the departure of other workers to their homes in the provinces. Of the numbers who are thus constantly arriving here, by far the larger proportion are single men just beginning life, most of whom would be found, if we could get at their personal histories, to have come hither with the design of earning, by the labour of their hands, the means of marrying and settling in life. There can be no doubt that, in point of moral character and steadiness of conduct, whatever be their skill as craftsmen, these young men constitute by far the most respectable and estimable portion of the working force of the metropolis, because they are unacquainted with its degrading vices, and the influences they have left behind them still act upon them for good: in the interests of the community, therefore, it is all-important that they should be preserved from contamination. But what is their position on arriving in London? In place of his country home, the new-comer has a cheap and dingy lodging in some attic or garret in a back street, where he is not expected to show himself, and would hardly be tolerated, until near bedtime. In consequence he is driven for shelter and accommodation to the cheap coffee-room or to the public-house, and to the latter place chiefly, because the public-house is the house-of-call for the disengaged members of his craft, and there he knows that he has the best chance of meeting with employment. But it is in the house-of-call that he will be sure to meet the very worst characters to be found in the trade to which he belongs; the sneaks, the shirks, the scamps, the sots and ne'er-do-wells of the profession, who are never employed for long together, seeing that no employer will put up with them save under the compulsory stress of business, and who delight in nothing so much as in demoralising and debauching the country novice, and making him as bad as themselves. Thousands of young fellows are morally ruined by the evil associations they thus contract, almost unavoidably, to their own perdition and the grief and heart-breaking of friends and parents at home. Now, if clubs and institutes for working men abounded, to which the members of all crafts might come as to a second home, and thus escape the snares and temptations which at present await them, it is as certain as any proposition that could be set down in words, that numbers of them would be saved from falling into vice, and that society would be so much the better for their salvation.

What is true of London is equally true of other large towns. The young workman is everywhere exposed to like domestic deprivations, and the like snares and temptations. We trust the working man's club and institute will ere long present to him everywhere the comfortable evening home, the harmless excitement, the guidance, the cordial fellowship, the means of mental culture, and the religious instruction, that he needs.

#### THE CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

The autumn of 1864 witnesses the successful completion of a design which originated more than a hundred years ago, and the means of whose execution have been slowly

accumulating under oppositions of various kinds during the whole of that period. The idea of building a bridge which should span the river Avon at a height of some two hundred and fifty feet above high-water mark, and unite Clifton Down, in the county of Gloucester, with Leigh Down, in the county of Somerset, if it did not originate with Mr. William Vick, Alderman of Bristol, was at least first mooted by him in a practical way. In the year 1753 this gentleman left by will the sum of £1000, with directions that the money should be invested and allowed to increase at compound interest until it had grown into £10,000, which he imagined would be sufficient to carry into execution his cherished purpose. As a rule, projects destined to be carried out by such means are very apt to fail: the money intended to swell abnormally in the hotbed of compound interest is found liable to various destructive checks, and, when it should be forthcoming in all its plenitude, is discovered to have vanished *in toto*, or at best to have dwindled away to some mere trifling amount, in a manner which is perfectly legitimate, of course, but which is only comprehensible by a Chancery lawyer. Some notable instances of this sort have transpired within the last few years; one of which, designed to culminate in the foundation of a huge fortune and a family name, but which came to a most mortifying crisis, will probably recur to the recollection of the reader. The scheme of Mr. Vick, though fated to meet with obstacles and delays, was, however, reserved for a better fortune; and now, after the good man has been a century in his grave, the thought of his mind has become a substantial fact, in a form far more noble, beautiful, and striking than he could possibly have conceived it. It is plain that the alderman had some misgivings that his bridge scheme might never be carried out; for he left directions that, in case the structure was not commenced within a given time after the completion of the £10,000, the money should be applied to other specified purposes.

The history of the bridge and the proceedings connected with it, from the decease of Alderman Vick to the present time, may be briefly summed up in the following particulars:—The legacy, placed out at interest, lay for sixty-six years quietly increasing, and by the year 1830 had grown to £8000. A committee was now appointed for carrying out the work, and they were aided in their operations by Mr. Telford, who also submitted to them a plan and design of the bridge, the cost of erecting which he estimated at £52,000. To meet this large expense it would be necessary to deviate from the intentions of Mr. Vick, who had designed that the bridge should be toll-free, and to levy tolls to meet the extra cost. For this purpose an Act of Parliament would be required; and accordingly an Act was applied for, and, after some opposition of no great moment, was obtained; the Act decreeing compensation to the proprietors of Rownham Ferry (an ancient ferry on the spot, which is supposed to date back so far as the twelfth century), which it was supposed would be injured by the erection of the bridge. This Act, destined to be of little use, was passed in May, 1830.

Under this Act new trustees were appointed, who made new regulations for the raising of loans and the payment of interest from the tolls to be received. They rejected the design of Telford, and accepted one by Isambard K. Brunel, who estimated the cost of construction at £57,000. After issuing a prospectus setting forth the advantages of the work, they commenced operations, in 1831, by a breakfast at the "Clifton Hotel," followed by the excavation of the first fragment of rock, under the direction of Mr. Brunel, some appropriate speech-making to a

large concourse of ladies and gentlemen, the discharge of artillery, and the performance of the National Anthem by the band of the Dragoon Guards. But in the autumn of that year came that terrible visitation of the Reform riots, during which the city was for a time surrendered to the savage outrages of the mob, and became the arena of plunder, incendiarism, and bloodshed. The citizens had now other things to think of, and the suspension bridge, and everything connected with it, passed for a time out of view, and for several years following little, if any, progress was made.

The passing of the Great Western Railway Bill revived the interest of the Bristolians for their suspension bridge. The works were resumed, and the abutment on the Clifton side was in good part finished by the close of 1835. In the following year visitors to the spot were astonished more than gratified by the spectacle of a crooked iron bar stretched across the chasm, of 700 feet, at a height of about 200 feet from the water. To this bar was slung a basket, in which people who chose to pay five shillings for the privilege of risking their necks were pulled across from one side to another, at that dizzy height, by means of a rope. This method of transit was in operation for a number of years, but, though useful in facilitating the passage of workmen when the works were in progress, was never, as may be easily conceived, largely patronized by the public.

In the month of August, 1836, contracts having been entered into for the work, the foundation-stone of the abutments on the Leigh Woods side was laid by the Marquis of Northampton, in the presence of an enormous concourse assembled from the city and neighbouring districts. The day was a gala-day for the Bristolians, was solemnized with due festivities, and concluded with an exhibition of fireworks, among which appeared an illumined model of the bridge. The building of these abutments was a formidable undertaking. On the Clifton side of the river the bold projecting rock had afforded a secure foundation for the pier; but there was no corresponding rock on the Leigh side, and the want of it had to be supplied by a mass of masonry no less than 500,000 cubic feet in bulk, starting from the sloping rock at the height of 130 feet above the water, and mounting pyramically 110 feet higher. The first contractors broke down under their responsibility; but after some months' delay others came forward to take their place; and the work, proceeding with as much rapidity as was consistent with perfect safety, was satisfactorily accomplished before the close of the year 1840.

Contracts were now entered into for the iron-work, for the extensive excavations necessary, and for preparing the roads of approach; but before the close of 1843 it was found that the funds for carrying on the work, which amounted altogether, including the legacy of Mr. Vick, to £45,000, had been exhausted; while half the iron-work, the suspension-chains, the approaches, the toll-houses, and various other indispensable requirements, remained to be provided for. £30,000 at least, it was estimated, was yet wanting to complete the bridge. This sum the trustees made vigorous attempts to raise, but from some cause or other the Bristol public did not respond to their appeal, and no course remained to them but to abandon the enterprise. The works were accordingly closed, and the trustees, in order to meet demands made upon them, sold many tons of the iron-work which had already been delivered, thus virtually acknowledging their despair of ever completing their enterprise; though this was not done without the energetic protest of one of their number.

For the next twenty years nothing appears to have

been done in the business of the bridge, with the exception of an ineffectual attempt on the part of the trustees to raise money for completing it on a cheaper plan, after the designs of Lieut.-Col. E. W. Serrel, the builder of the Lewiston Suspension Bridge, which crosses the Niagara. This gentleman proposed to erect a bridge of wire, in lieu of one of iron chains, and thus to complete the design at a moderate cost. This scheme, however, fell to the ground, partly from the indifference manifested by the public towards it, and partly, no doubt, from the fact that the time allowed by the Act of 1830 for the execution of the works had expired in 1853, so that no fresh attempt could be made without first obtaining a new Act.

But in the year 1860 the suspension bridge at Hungerford Market, London, had to be taken down to make room for the larger structure which now carries the Charing Cross Railway across the Thames. The iron-work of the Hungerford Bridge, built by Mr. Brunel, was seen to be peculiarly adapted for the Clifton bridge, which he had designed and in part executed. The members of the Civil Engineers Institute, desirous of completing his unfinished work, associated themselves together, and purchased the chains and materials, and began a negotiation for the transfer of the works at Clifton to a new company. Subsequently, a committee was formed, consisting of the Earl of Ducie, the Mayor of Bristol, the Master of the Society of Merchants, and many other influential gentlemen. By them the new company was organized, with a capital of £35,000, in shares of £10 each, and they applied for a new Act of Parliament.

The new Act, incorporating "The Clifton Suspension Bridge Company," was obtained without opposition, and received the royal assent in June, 1861. Under its provisions the land on each side the river, and the existing works, were purchased of the old company, and contracts were concluded for the purchase and transfer of the iron-work and materials of Hungerford Bridge, and re-erecting them over the Avon. There was now no more delay, but the enterprise was proceeded with as fast as the materials were set free by the demolition of the old bridge. The contractors were Messrs. Cochrane and Co., of Dudley; the engineers, Messrs. J. Hawkshaw and W. H. Barlow; and the work has been carried on throughout under the constant personal superintendence of Mr. Thomas Airey, who is the inventor of much of the machinery which it has been found necessary to employ in the prosecution of the arduous undertaking.

Clifton Bridge was intended by Mr. Vick to be toll-free; but there is small probability that the existing generation will see that intention carried out. Provision, however, is made in the Act of Parliament for freeing the bridge in course of time. The dividends of shareholders are restricted to 7½ per cent., and when any surplus remains after paying the dividends, and a specified compensation to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as proprietors of Rownham Ferry, such surplus is to be handed over to the trustees under the first Act of Parliament, to be by them applied in the purchase of the share capital, until the whole is redeemed.

The completion of this great work is one of the most remarkable triumphs of engineering which has yet been achieved. The Clifton Bridge must take rank as the most magnificent chain bridge in existence. The famous Menai Bridge of Telford cannot be compared with it in point of dimensions, the Clifton Bridge being 143 feet wider in span from pier to pier, and rising nearly 150 feet higher above the water; at the same time it is unrivalled in point of situation, and for grandeur of position and striking picturesque effect has no equal in the world.





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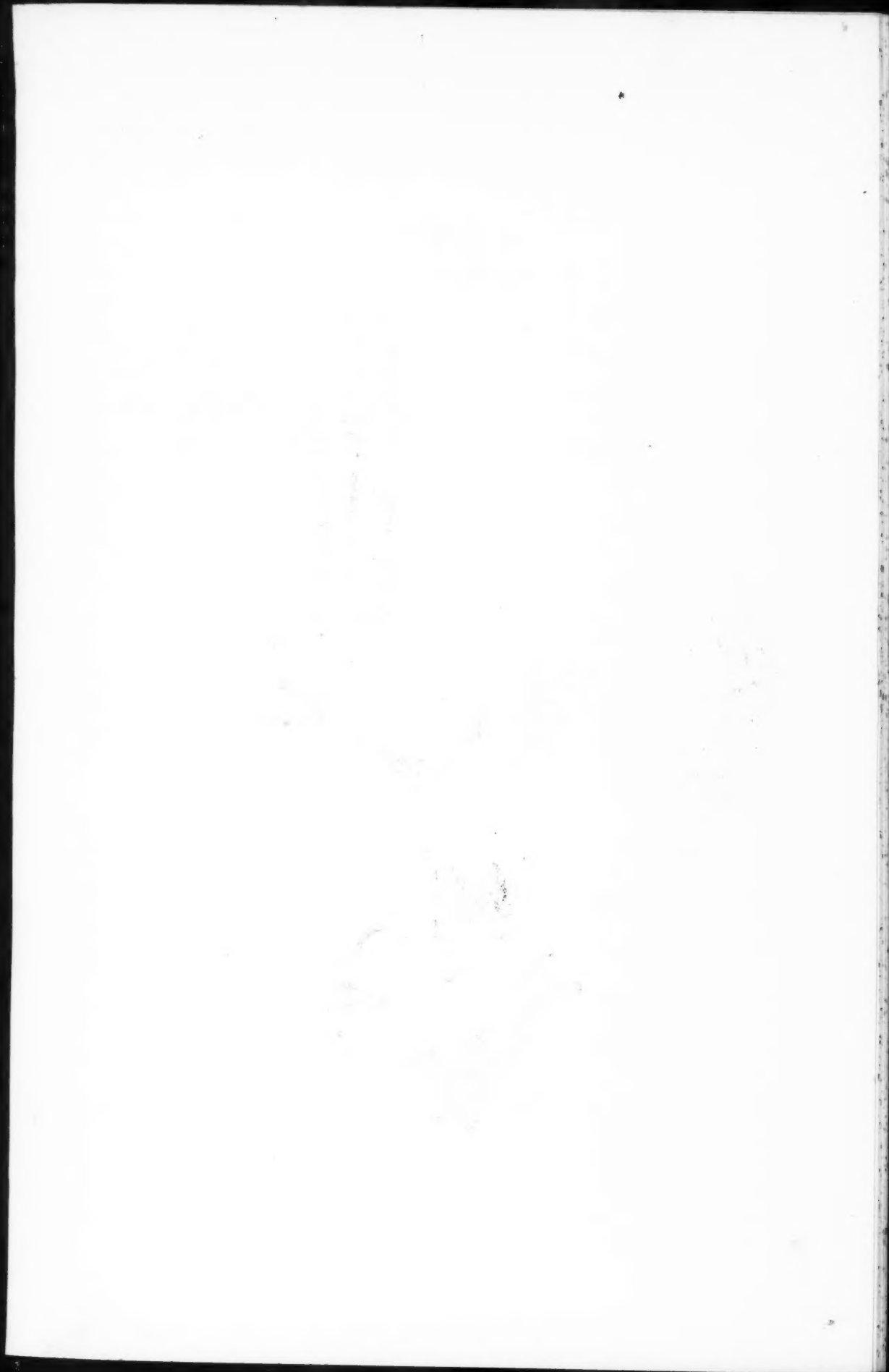
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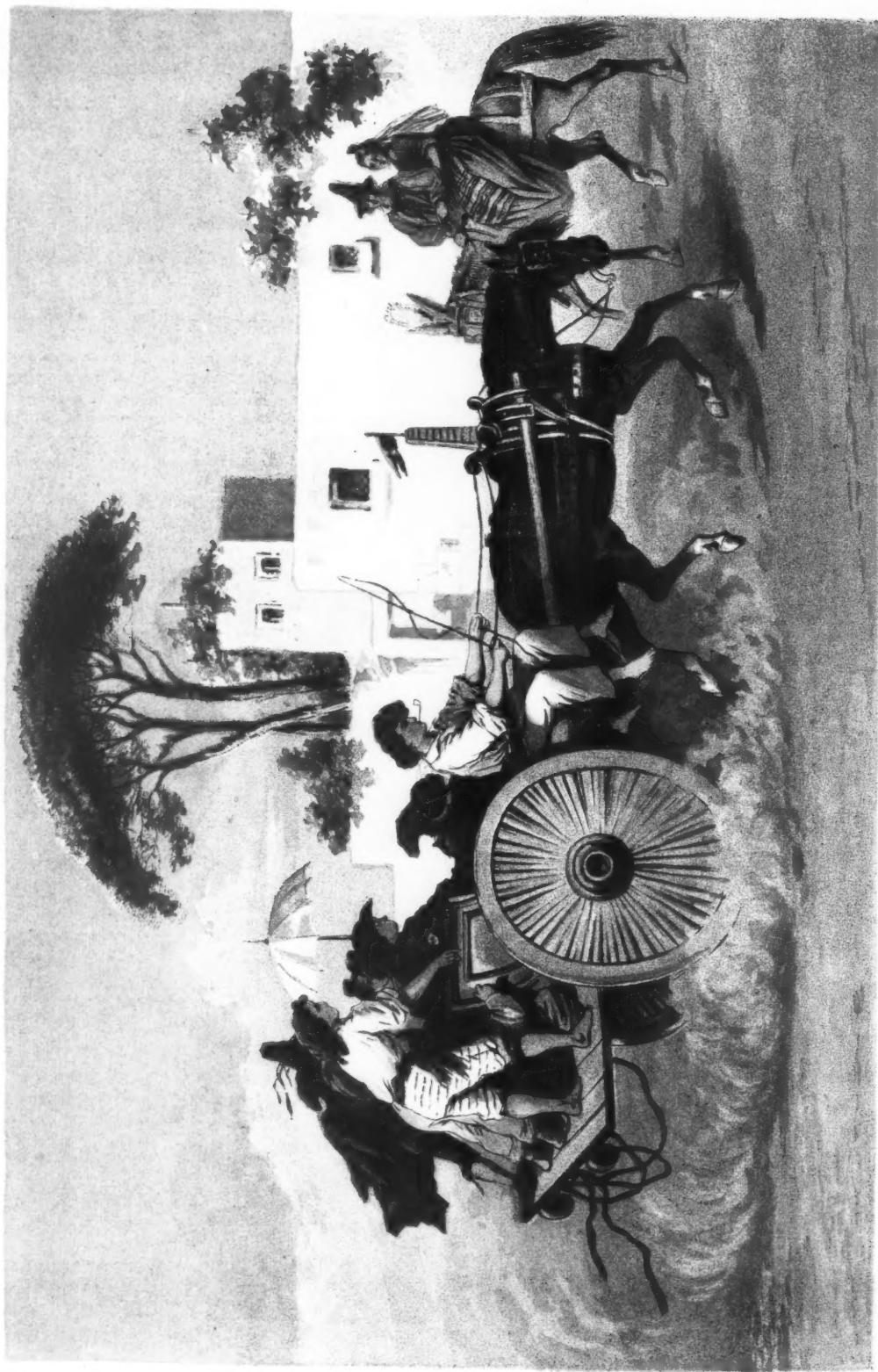












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